

# CARIDINA TYPUS H. MILNE EDWARDS 1837 FROM THE INDIAN MAINLAND — A REPORT<sup>1</sup>

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(With four text-figures)

**Key words:** *Caridina typus*, Crustacea, Atyidae, Appendix masculina, Appendix interna

Freshwater prawns of the family Atyidae enjoy wide distribution in India. Nearly a century ago, Henderson (1893) first recorded the occurrence of an atyid prawn from India, of the genus *Caridina*, which he identified as *C. wyckii* (Hickson), from Chennai. In subsequent years, several carcinologists contributed towards the taxonomy of the Atyidae of India. Yet, the type species of the genus *Caridina* viz. *Caridina typus*. H. Milne Edwards 1837, though widely distributed in the Indo-Pacific area, was recorded only from Andaman Islands (Tiwari & Pillai 1971) and not from the Indian mainland. The present note records the occurrence of *C. typus* from four streams in the fringing localities of Kanyakumari district of Tamil Nadu and extends its distribution to the Indian mainland.

## INTRODUCTION

As part of a research project, the first author surveyed the freshwater bodies of Kanyakumari dist. for the presence of freshwater prawns. Numerous specimens of several species of the atyid genus *Caridina* were collected. *C. typus* was collected for the first time from the Indian mainland, from the streams in Methukammal, Kunchacode, Manavalakurichi and Manakal Odai (Fig. 1). Samples of the collected specimens are deposited in Rijksmuseum Van Natuurlijke Historie Leiden, The Netherlands – Reg No. Crust. D. 46659.

*Caridina typus* H. Milne Edwards 1837.  
(Figs. 2-4)

## DESCRIPTION

Maximum length of the prawn is 39 mm. Males 14-24 mm; Females 32-39 mm. Rostrum short, reaching the tip of the 2nd segment of the

antennular peduncle; upper margin entire; lower margin interrupted with 1-3 teeth.

$$\text{Rostral formula} = \frac{0}{1-3}$$

Antennal spine is at the lower orbital angle. The pterygostomian angle is rounded. Stylocerite reaches 3/4th of the basal segment of the antennular peduncle.

Carpus of the 1st pereopod deeply excavated, equal to merus and shorter than chela, 1.38 to 1.5 times as long as its breadth. Carpus of the 2nd pereopod not deeply excavated, 4.06 to 5.10 times as long as its breadth and longer than merus and chela. Finger longer than palm; propodus of 3<sup>rd</sup> pereopod 8.30 to 10.30 times as long as its breadth, 3.98 to 4.0 times the dactylus and bears 5 to 7 spines. Propodus of the 5th pereopod 13.10 to 14.50 times as long as its breadth, 3.70 to 4.20 times the dactylus. Dactylus 4.03 to 4.50 times its breadth and bears 45 to 60 minute spinules arranged in a comb-like fashion.

Pereopods 1 to 4 bear epipodites. The first pleopods of the males bear a distinct appendix interna on their endopod. The 2nd male pleopod bears appendix masculina.

Telson bears 5 to 6 pairs of dorsal spines. Its posterior margins bear a median spine and

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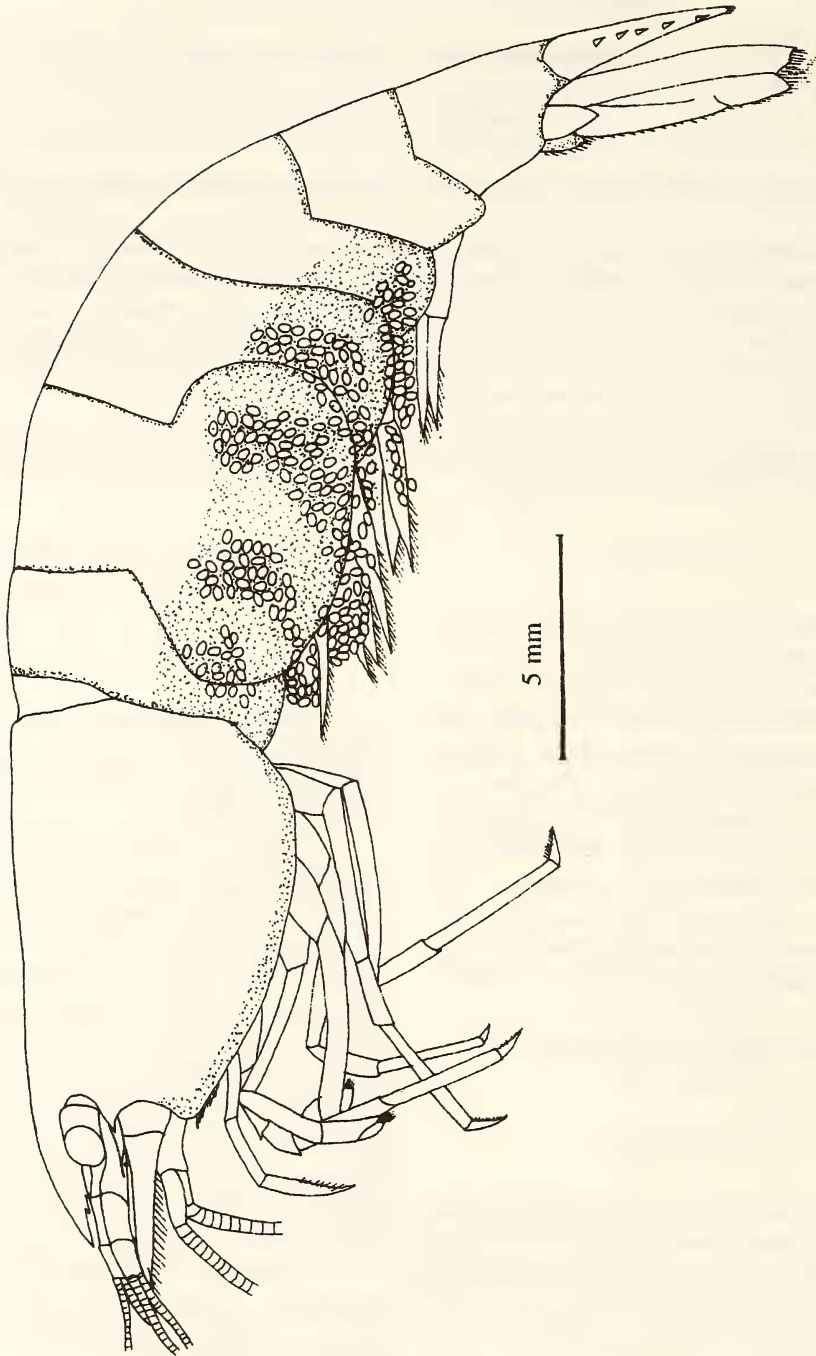


Fig. 1: *Caridina typus* H. Milne Edwards 1837. Lateral view

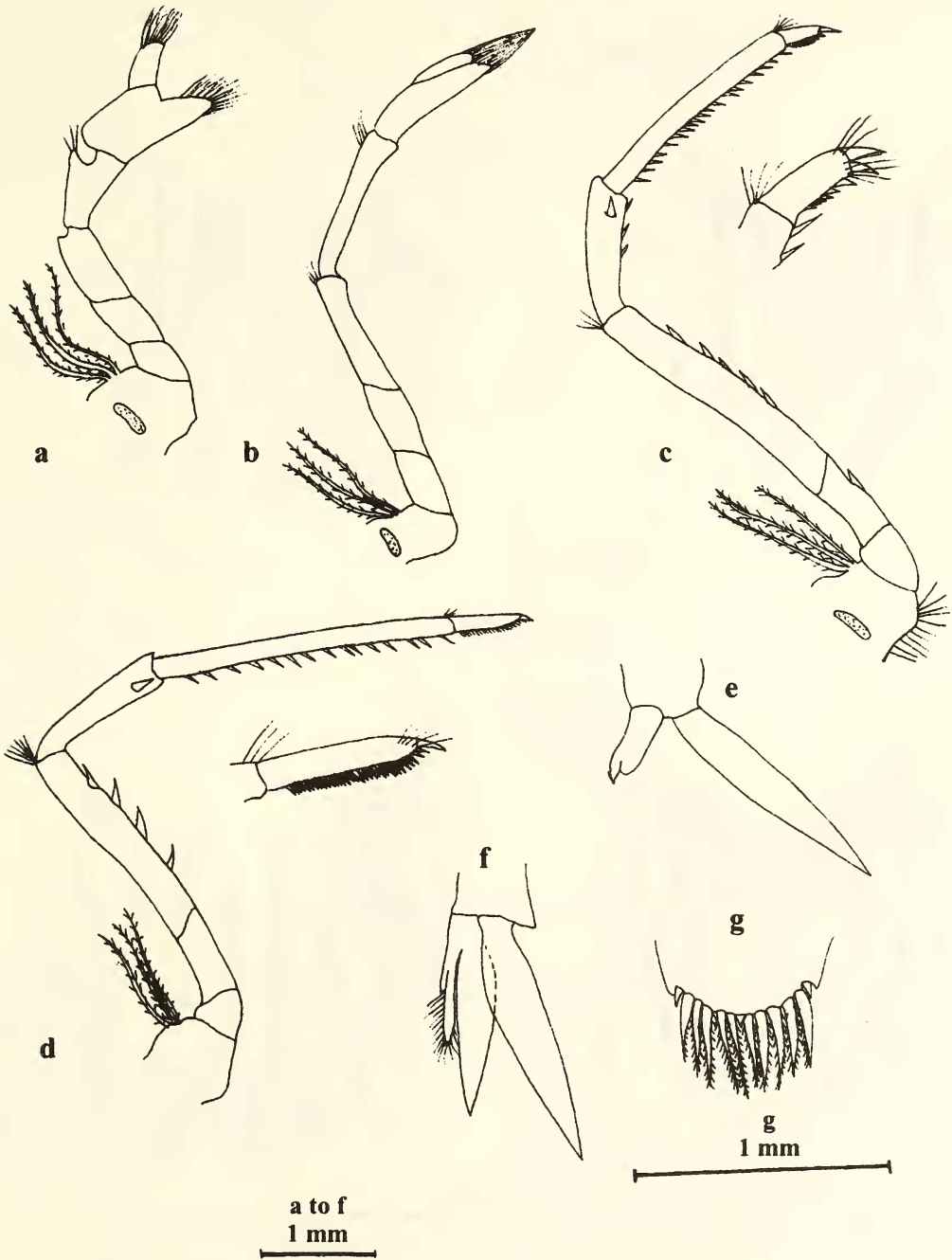


Fig. 2: *Caridina typus* H. Milne Edwards, 1837. a - c: Pereiopods I-III; d: Pereiopod V; e: Pleopod I of male; f: Pleopod II of male; g: Telson.

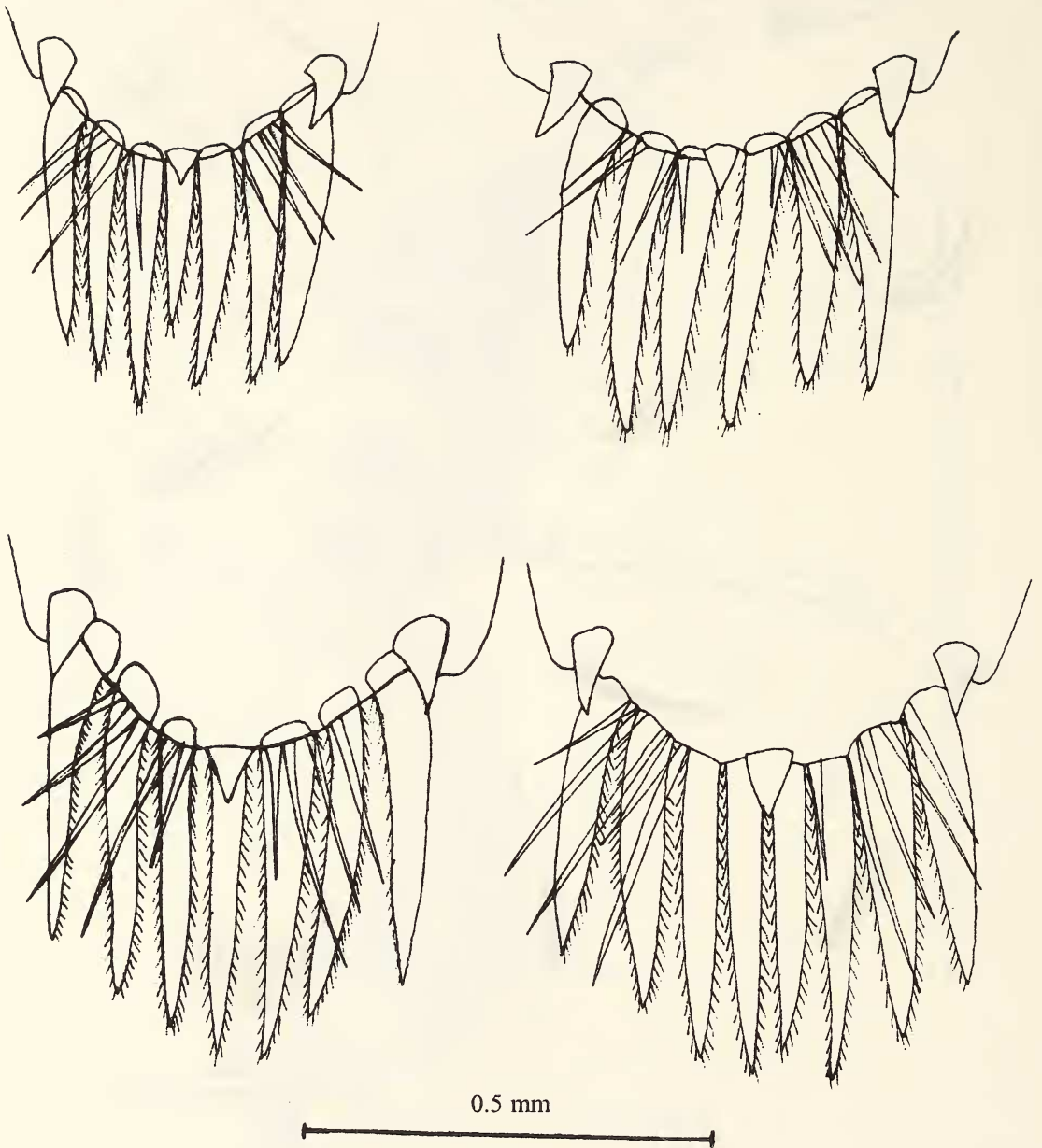


Fig. 3: *Caridina typus* H. Milne Edwards 1837, variations in Telson

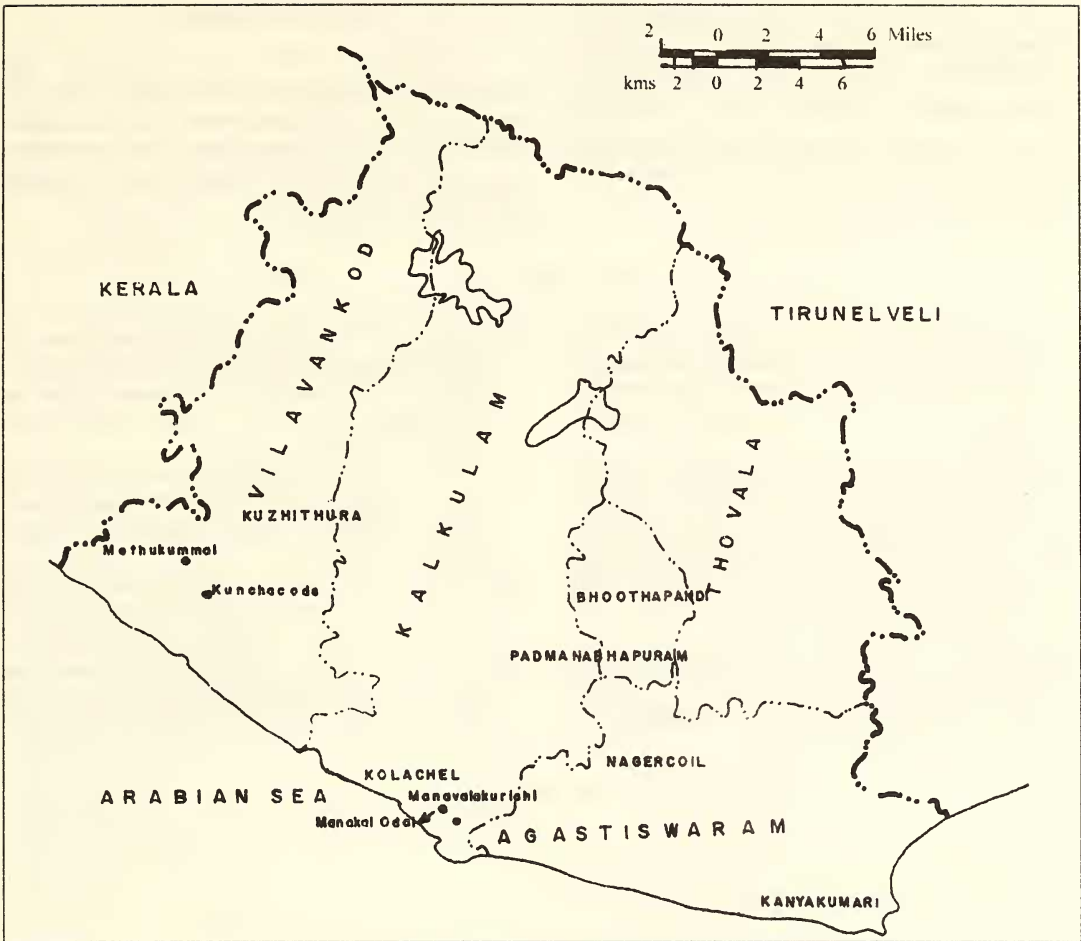


Fig. 4: Map of Kanyakumari district showing locations of occurrence of *Caridina typus*

6 to 10 long spines. The lateral spines are slightly shorter than the median ones which are almost equal in length.

Uropod diaeresis spines are 16 to 21 (mostly 19). Eggs numerous; in one berried female there were 3708. Each egg measures 0.24 to 0.29 mm x 0.42 to 0.47 mm.

DISCUSSION

*Caridina typus* has a wide distribution in the Indo-west Pacific area, ranging from East Africa to Japan and Polynesia (Holthuis, 1965).

Johnson (1960, 1963) dealt with *C. typus* and emphasized the insular distribution of the species, being restricted to a few fringing localities never far from the sea and never in major river systems. Tiwari & Pillai (1971) described *C. typus* from freshwater streams of Andaman Islands. So far, *C. typus* had not been reported from the Indian mainland, even though it was reported from neighbouring Sri Lanka by De Silva (1982) and Benzie & De Silva (1984).

The present report of *C. typus* from the freshwater streams of Kanyakumari dist.

confirms the presence of the species on the Indian mainland for the first time. The pattern of distribution along the shore conforms with the observation of Johnson (1963). The present record of this species along the fringing localities of Kanyakumari dist. may lead to further reports from the Indian subcontinent.

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